HOXTON PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL

Excursion Policy

Knowledge is Strength

Revised March 2007
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Introduction

Excursions are regarded as valuable educational experiences, integral to teaching and learning. A school excursion is initiated, organised and supervised by a school and approved by the principal and, when more than one school is involved, the principals of all participating schools. Principals must consider the educational value of all proposed excursions in relation to the overall needs and resources of the school. The rationale for any excursion should reference the school’s curriculum objectives and should be relevant to their achievement.

Regular weekly school sport is not regarded as an excursion but is subject to operational and consent procedures. Visits by sporting teams and performers arranged and conducted by DET state office units and regional bodies are not regarded as excursions but are subject to specific health, safety and welfare procedures.

Excursion policy:

1. The educational value of an excursion must take account of the needs and resources of the school, the needs of the students and the total learning program.
2. Excursions are inclusive and all students within the specific learning group are to be given the opportunity to participate.
3. A duty of care is owed to students in the school environment and while on excursions.
4. The principal must be satisfied that there are sufficient teachers to maintain adequate control of the whole excursion. Teachers retain the ultimate responsibility for supervision.
5. The DET's duty of care owed to students for the duration of an excursion cannot be delegated from the school to parents, volunteers or employees of external organisations.
6. The obligation to report suspected risk of harm to children and young people applies throughout all stages of an excursion, as it does in schools.
7. A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed.
8. Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in excursions and a medical information form are to be obtained from parents or caregivers.
9. Safe transport or a safe walking route is to be organised for excursions.
10. Students must behave appropriately at all times while on excursions.

Supporting Students

1. All students should have the opportunity to participate in an excursion. Where financial hardship is understood to be the reason for a student's non-participation, schools must endeavour to provide financial assistance.
2. The support needs of students with disabilities or medical conditions will require consultation with parents and caregivers. Support should be provided for these students so they can access the learning experiences available through excursions.
3. Parents, including those from language backgrounds other than English, should be informed of the educational value of the excursion and how it is part of the learning program.
Duty of Care

1. The duty of care to students applies whether the school excursion is held during school hours, after school, on the weekend or during school holidays.
2. Teachers planning excursions must consider emergency response planning, including medical procedures, and should check relevant forecasts or other safety warnings, including fire bans, immediately prior to events.
3. In consultation with relevant authorities, schools must be prepared to alter or cancel excursions due to emerging safety concerns.
4. Principals are to ensure that any excursion involving swimming or water activities and any excursion involving overnight stays, includes a member of staff who possesses current accreditation in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency care. All other excursions must be accompanied by a member of staff who has undertaken emergency care training and whose qualifications are current.
5. A first aid kit must be taken on all excursions.
6. The DET's duty of care to students cannot be delegated from the school to parents, caregivers, volunteers or employees of external organisations.
7. Parents, caregivers and volunteers must be briefed on safety and behaviour measures prior to the excursion. Principals must ensure that all parents, caregivers or volunteers accompanying school excursions complete a Prohibited Employment Declaration (Page ).
8. Volunteers are not to accompany the excursion if:
   a. they refuse to complete the Prohibited Employment Declaration, or
   b. they indicate they are a prohibited person

Teacher to student ratio

The number of teachers to accompany the students for each excursion is to be determined by the principal. Decisions about the number of students and teachers should take into account factors such as the age of the students, their maturity, the location of the excursion, specific needs of students, anticipated behaviour and the nature of the activities to be undertaken. There must be sufficient numbers of appropriate, responsible adults, including support teachers and teachers' aides, to ensure and assist with adequate supervision.

Principals in determining the number of teachers required for an excursion should be guided by Department statements on class sizes. Fewer students per teacher will be necessary for some excursions such as bushwalking. Particular aquatic and outdoor recreation activities have specific teacher/instructor to student ratios. These are identified in the Guidelines for Specific Activities section of Guidelines for the Safe Conduct of Sport and Physical Activity in Schools policy.
Risk Assessment
A risk assessment is to be conducted and a risk management plan developed before seeking approval for any excursion.

1. The OHS Act and Regulation require principals and teachers organising excursions to use risk management to ensure the health and safety of students, staff and excursion volunteers.
2. Principals should ensure that individual health care plans for students with health care needs or disabilities include provision for the management of such conditions on excursions. A copy of this plan should be given to the teacher in charge of the excursion and its implications discussed before departure.
3. The extent of pre-excursion planning will depend on the nature of the excursion and its location. In many situations prior experience of the site or a briefing from a responsible person with a sound knowledge of the site will suffice.
4. A visit to the proposed excursion site is recommended when unfamiliar or potentially high risk activities are contemplated. In these circumstances the pre-excursion visit should address issues such as access, injury prevention and emergency evacuation.

Consent Forms
Signed consent forms granting permission for students to participate in an excursion and a medical information form are to be obtained from parents or caregivers.

The fact that parents or caregivers consent to the participation of their child in an excursion should not be taken as removing the responsibility of school staff for taking all reasonable steps to ensure the particular activity is safe.

For many excursions it will not be necessary to collect a new medical information form. Medical information held by the school should, however, be updated as required and take account of activities proposed for the excursion.

Information identifying food or other allergies, special dietary needs and other health care related issues (including prior conditions such as medical procedures in the last 12 months), should be provided by parents or caregivers. This information will assist planning to support students and minimise risks, including the risk of exposure to allergens for students at risk of anaphylactic reactions.

Excursion consent forms do not create any waiver of rights by the parent or the caregiver in relation to their child. The main purpose of consent forms and information forms is to give enough detail to parents and caregivers to allow them to make an informed decision about whether their child should attend the excursion. It is also to assist the parent or caregiver to provide relevant information to the school about the child's care needs.
Transport
Safe transport or a safe walking route is to be organised for excursions.

1. In some circumstances where the site of the excursion is close to the school, it will be appropriate for students and their supervisors to walk to the site. The decision to walk should be preceded by a risk assessment and the route should be determined consistent with the objective of ensuring staff and student safety.
2. Public transport (government bus, rail and ferry services, or private bus and ferry services) should be used for school excursions, wherever appropriate.

Bus and train travel

1. When hiring buses for excursions, principals should refer to the policy on the use of seatbelts on buses (99/293). Seatbelts must be worn on buses when they are available.
2. Principals should attempt to hire buses with seatbelts wherever practicable and particularly for long distance travel. In the case of large vehicles, the number of passengers must not exceed the number that the vehicle is licensed to carry.
3. When organising an excursion by rail, principals should contact their local railway station concerning excursion concessions and other arrangements.
4. If students with disabilities are participating in an excursion accessible transport will be required.

Car travel

1. The transporting of students in the cars of staff members, parents, caregivers or volunteers should only occur in those circumstances where there is no feasible option available to provide alternative transportation. This may only occur under the following conditions:
   1. written permission from the parent(s) or caregiver(s) of the student(s) being transported is obtained
   2. the driver is licensed
   3. the vehicle is registered
   4. the number of passengers in the vehicle does not exceed the number of seatbelts
   5. current driver's licence and car registration details are sighted by the school prior to giving permission for students to be transported in the vehicle.
2. Comprehensive insurance is not generally required. Nevertheless, comprehensive insurance is required if a member of staff is authorised to use his or her vehicle for official business and wishes to make a claim for the payment of mileage.
3. Principals must ensure that all parents, caregivers or volunteers who transport students in cars complete a Prohibited Employment Declaration prior to the excursion.

Watching Movies
Parents and caregivers must be informed of the classification of the film and provided with the opportunity to withdraw their child. The principal may delegate the task of previewing the entire film or performance to an executive member of staff who will then advise the principal as to its suitability and acceptability. The principal has responsibility for granting approval and must take into account the age and maturity of the students.
Excursion Checklist

Please note  The following checklist must be adhered to in the order presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>checklist</th>
<th>date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Discussion with supervisor (eg curriculum links etc)</td>
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<td>2. Check school calendar for available dates</td>
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<td>3. Tentative booking venue &amp; transport made through office</td>
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<td>4. Excursion price set in consultation with SAM</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Risk Assessment completed</td>
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<td>6. Discussed with supervisor and presented to principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Draft permission note to supervisor</td>
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<td>9. Seek interpreted notes from ESL staff, if needed</td>
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<td>10. Permission note and risk assessment to principal</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Permission note must be arranged through the office to include letterhead and credit card details then sent home</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Playground duties covered &amp; RFF, support informed</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Arrangements for students not attending confirmed</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. All consent forms back and medical plans completed if needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Excursion roll, inc class splits to the office</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Cheque obtained (as applicable, 2 days notice needed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Mobile phone, first aid kit obtained (as applicable)</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Discuss risk assessment etc with attending staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>19. Have a great day!!</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>20. Completed evaluation to principal</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Principal:

___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Risk management process

Risk management is a process consisting of well-defined steps which, when taken in sequence, support better decision making by contributing to a greater insight into risks and their impacts. Risk management processes are used to identify hazards and to assess and eliminate or control risks associated with activities.

Consultation with key stakeholders including staff, parents and external venue providers is a central component of the risk management process.

Although the focus for risk management may differ from school to school, the same steps should be followed. These steps are consistent with the principles of risk management outlined in chapter 2 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001.

The five essential steps of the risk management process are:

1. Risk identification
2. Risk assessment
3. Risk elimination or control
4. Communicate the risk management plan
5. Monitoring and review.

Principals should also ensure that plans are documented and retained to assist in future planning of excursions.

In the context of student excursions the risk management process should examine, but not be limited to, the following:

- type and aims of the activity or program
- child protection issues
- age and experience of the participants
- special factors such as participants with medical conditions or disabilities
- level of adult supervision and support required
- level of skills and training required by adult support
- level of resourcing needed to support the activity
- DET policies or procedures relevant to the excursion activity
- type of information required by participants and their families
- method of communication required, e.g. interpreters
- potential risks and known dangers associated with the activity or program
- potential risks and known dangers associated with travel to the location
- availability of support services in the locality where activity is occurring
- contingency plans for addressing potential accidents or injury
- the venue used has public liability cover
- type of communication required if English is not the primary language spoken or read by students’ families.

Information gained from this examination would comprise the first step of the risk management process: risk identification.

Risks identified then need to be analysed and evaluated in terms of their potential impact for students and staff undertaking the excursion.

A simple way of representing the risk management process as it applies to excursions is by using the following flow chart:
Step 1: Risk identification
Determine the activities which will be undertaken as part of the excursion and the risks associated with those activities.

Identify:
- the types and aims of the activity program
- the risks associated with the excursion activities
- the age and experience of the participants
- issues related to child protection
- participants (students) with medical conditions or disabilities
- the risks associated with travel or billeting

Step 2: Risk assessment
Determine the impact of the risk on the ability of the excursion to proceed safely.

Answer:
- What is the likelihood of the identified risk and its impact?
- What is the potential severity of the identified risk and its impact?

Step 3: Risk elimination or control
Consider the most suitable preventative and response strategies for each of the identified risks.

For example:
- How important is the activity to the excursion that this risk be controlled?
- level of adult supervision and support required
- level of skills and training required by adult support
- level of resourcing needed
- plans for addressing potential accident or injury
- availability of support and services in the locality where the excursion is taking place
- communication strategies where English is not the primary language spoken by students or their host families

Step 4: Communicate the risk management plan
Determine:
- who needs to be informed of the risk management plan
- how they will be informed

Step 5: Monitoring and review
Following steps 1-3 an easy-to-follow plan is developed including a list of supporting documents and contacts.

In the context of the particular excursion:
- identify necessary documents and contacts
- establish procedures for monitoring receipt of parental/caregiver consent and disclosure of medical conditions
- test the risk management plan
- review the excursion outcomes after its completion
# OHS Risk management plan pro-forma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard/Risk Identification</th>
<th>Priority (severity &amp; likelihood)</th>
<th>Risk Management Plan - Elimination or Control Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type/Cause</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Elimination Substitution Isolation Engineering Administration PPE)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Who</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excursion coordinator:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Consulted with:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal:</td>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>Risk Management Plan communicated to:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Monitor and Review

- Were the controls effective?  
- Were all those involved in the excursion aware of the controls?  
- Were new hazards identified?  

- What further actions are required for future excursions?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature:</th>
<th>Review Date:</th>
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</thead>
</table>
Permission Note Proforma

Leave minimum 4.5cm for letterhead.

Insert name of excursion

Body of Letter – please use ‘justify’

.PERMISSION NOTE - (name of excursion)

I have read and understood the above information. I give permission for my child ________________ of class ________________ to attend (venue name) on (date).

I understand that my child will travel to and from the venue by bus and that a total of $ is to be paid at the office by (choose a date at least 3 days before excursion).

My child suffers from the following medical condition: __________________________
The Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 makes it an offence for a person convicted of a serious sex offence (a prohibited person) or a Registrable Person under the Child Protection/Offenders Registration Act 2000 to apply for, undertake or remain in, child-related employment. It does not apply if an order from the Industrial Relations Commission or the Administrative Decisions Tribunal, declares that the Act does not apply to a particular person.

Section 5 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 defines a serious sex offence as an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed in NSW and that was punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment of 12 months or more even if the sentence was not served, or, an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed elsewhere and that would have been an offence punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more if it had been committed in NSW.

Child-related employment means any employment that primarily involves direct contact with children where that contact is not directly supervised. Section 1 of the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 specifies that child-related employment is employment:

- involving the provision of child protection services
- in pre-schools, kindergartens and child care centres (including residential child care centres)
- in schools or other educational institutions (not including universities)
- in detention centres (within the meaning of the Child (Detention Centres) Act 1987)
- in refuges used by children
- in wards of public or private hospitals in which children are patients
- in clubs, associations or movements (including of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) having a significant child membership
- in any religious organisation
- in any entertainment venues where the clientele is primarily children
- as a babysitter or childcare worker that is arranged by a commercial agency
- involving fostering or other child care
- involving regular provision of taxi services for the transport of children with a disability
- involving the private tuition of children
- involving the direct provision of health services
- involving the provision of counselling or other support services for children
- on school buses
- at overnight camps for children.

Under this Act:

- it is an offence for a prohibited person to apply for, undertake or remain in child-related employment
- employers must ask existing employees, both paid and unpaid, and preferred applicants for employment to declare whether they are a prohibited person or not
- all child-related employees must inform their employers if they are a "prohibited person" or remove themselves from child-related employment. A prohibited person is someone who has been convicted of a serious sexual offence or, who has had a finding for a charge of serious sexual offence proven in court, even if a conviction was not recorded.
- penalties are imposed for non-compliance.

I am aware that I am ineligible to apply for, undertake or remain in, child-related employment if I have been convicted of a "serious sex offence" as defined in the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 or if I am a "Registrable Person" under the Child Protection (Offenders Registration) Act 2000. I have read and understood the above information in relation to the Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 and understand my responsibilities and obligations under this Act.

I declare that I am not a person prohibited by the Act from seeking, undertaking, or remaining in child-related employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (block letters)</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Serial no.</td>
<td>Date</td>
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Note: Seek independent legal advice if you are unsure of your status as a prohibited person. This form should be returned to the selection panel convener / principal / manager of the workplace as appropriate.
Medical information form

The information provided on ……………… by ……………… is being obtained for the purpose of …………………………………………………………….

It will be used by the NSW Department of Education and Training for ………………………

[If applicable] Other persons and/or agencies that will be provided with this information are ……………………………… for the purpose of ……………………………

Provision of this information is required by law / voluntary. It will be stored securely.

[If applicable] If you do not provide all or any of this information then ………………………

You may correct any personal information provided at any time by contacting ………………

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student name: ………………</th>
<th>Class: ………………</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parent or caregiver contact details</td>
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<td>Name:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Home phone: ………………</td>
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<td>Doctor contact details</td>
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<td>Name:</td>
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<td>Address:</td>
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<td>Doctor’s telephone:</td>
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<td>Emergency contact(s) details (nominated by the parent or caregiver as alternate contact)</td>
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<td>1. Name: ………………</td>
<td>Phone: ………………</td>
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<td>2. Name: ………………</td>
<td>Phone: ………………</td>
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<td>List existing medical conditions or illnesses (include asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, allergies etc.).</td>
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<td>Outline the treatment for each.</td>
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Medical conditions or illnesses continued

Outline special dietary needs including possible reaction to inappropriate diet

Medication(s) to be administered during the excursion. Include name of medication, instructions for administration, time of administration, and any possible reactions

Signature: ................................................................. Date: ........................................

Please return this form by: .................................................................
**Excursion Evaluation**

Excursion location: ____________________________________________

Excursion Date: ________________

Classes and staff in attendance: ______________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Travel was by _____________________.

Excursion cost: ______________________

Outcomes achieved:
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Issues, variations needed: ___________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Issues from risk assessment or injuries: ________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Other comments: _________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________

Evaluation completed by ________________________________ ( ___ / ___ / ___ )